

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. Purpose of and Need for Action

1. Project Title: Helena Trap Club

2. Type of Proposed Action: (1) Purchase two sets of wireless voice calls
(2) Purchase two Pat-trap systems
(3) Build two new and improve existing shooters' shelters.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action: The range is on a leased 57 acre parcel of land located on Montana Ave. and I-15 on Montana Ave. approximately 2.5 miles north of Helena, Montana. Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter (SE ¼ of NW ¼) of Section Five (5), Township Ten (10) North, Range Three (3) West, Montana.

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) MCA87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The 2007 Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges for public purposes. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

5. Need for the Action(s): Modernization and expansion of the existing ranges is necessary for the increased number of shooters and shooting events in the Helena area. Additionally, these measures will provide shelter from the weather and will improve the safety and efficiency of the range. It will make the range more accessible for handicapped shooters, and improve operations for registered shoots, Hunter Education programs, local law enforcement and other groups.

6. Objectives for the Action(s): The objective is to provide increased opportunity to participate in safe organized and efficient operation with increased shooting opportunities. This will ultimately result in an improved and safer shooting experience for all shooters, in addition to better training or educational environment for the club, other user organizations, law enforcement, hunter education, and any other additional public uses.

7. Map:

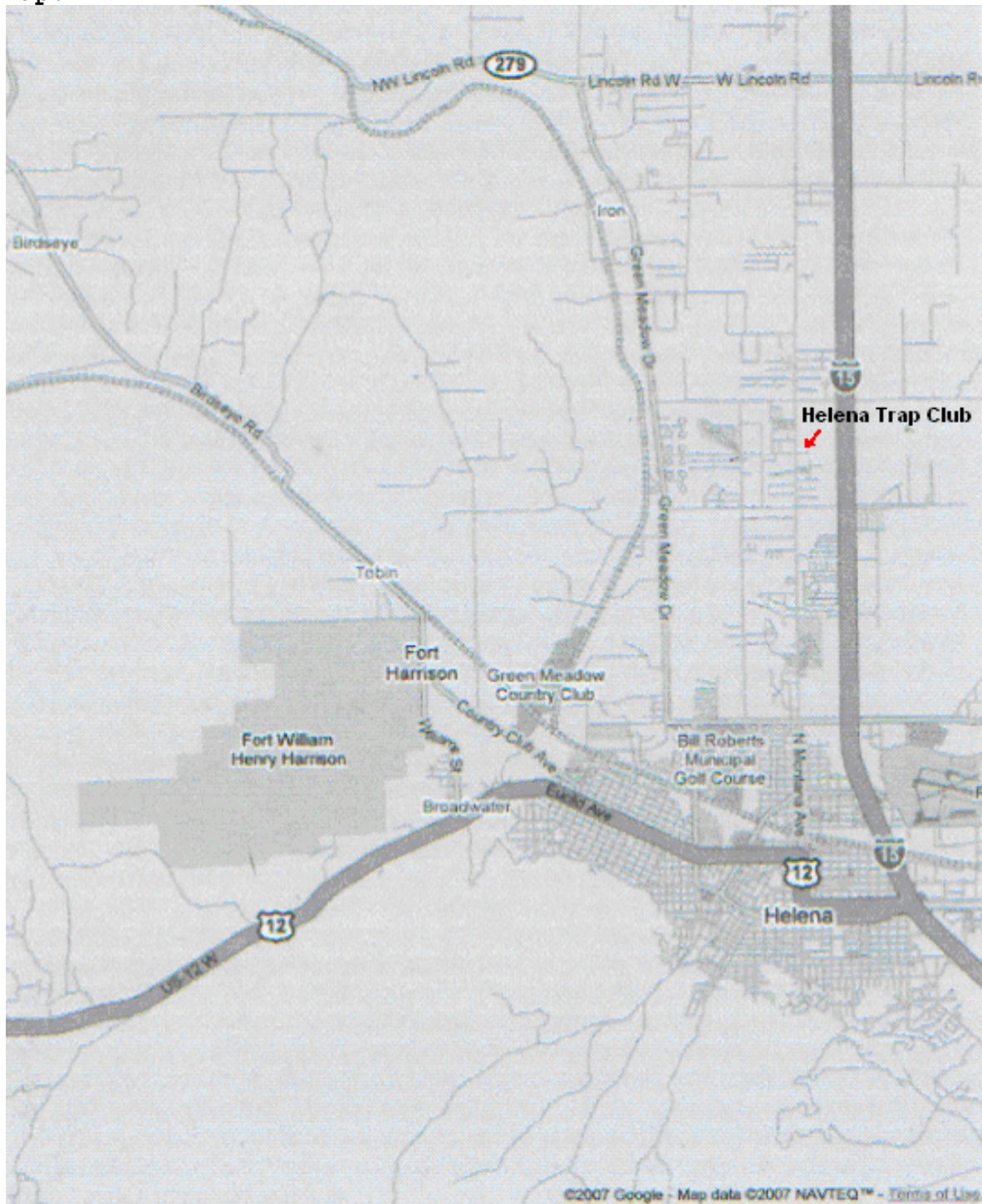


Figure 1 - Location of Helena Trap Club north of Helena, MT.

8. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected: Site is a 57 acre parcel of land located at 5505 N. Montana Ave. approximately 2.7 miles north of Helena, MT. However, the improvements are limited to a much smaller area within the actual range area.

9. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project): The range parcel is located on club owned property. Club range has been in existence on this site since 1940. Over the years the surrounding area has grown up into a light rural type residential area. The club properties, shot fall out zones and safety zones are more than adequate for safe operations of the range. Club is located between heavily traveled areas of Montana Avenue and I-15.

10. Description of Project: Purchase two sets of wireless voice calls to replace older system with cords and wire running across the shooting area. Additional purchase and installation of two Pat-trap automatic systems to replace leased or borrowed traps. Improve existing shooters' shelters with concrete floors and add two additional shelters at the east end of the range.

11. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

(a) **Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>
None Required	

Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$10,995

12. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups: Approximately 12 organization use the range facilities with a given year, i.e. Capital Sports, Youth Shooting Clinics, Hunter Education, Junior Police Academy, 4-H Club, 4-H archery, Junior Scholastic Clay Target Program for youth, Spring, Women's, Youth, and Fall shooting leagues in addition to four ATA/MSTA registered shooting events. Current usage on the range is approximately 1,100 people per year with an additional 400 every four years when the club hosts the State shoot. Improvements to the range are estimated to increase the range usage by 100-150 people per year.

13. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement: Proposed range improvements and safety enhancements had been discussed within the membership of the club and with the associated project vendors and contractors.

14. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

15. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:

Wayne Schottler, Field Captain
3365 Pine Hills Dr.
Helena, MT 59602
432-1944

16. Other Pertinent Information: Helena Trap Club has been in existence since 1935 and moved to its current location in 1940. Shooting range applications require the participant's governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range funding assistance. Resolution Date: April 10, 2007

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist - The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas)

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		#2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

2. & 5. There are no live streams or ponds on the site and no delineated wetlands.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		
5. Human health				X		#5
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		#7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

5. Range site plans, construction and the ongoing operational and maintenance plans meet the standards of safety for the range participants, the public at large, and improvements will further enhance safety on the range.

7. Range provides year round controlled access and fulfils a need for a range to accommodate hunter education, and public shooting.

Part III. Environmental Consequences

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? No

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? No

Identification of the Preferred Alternatives:

- **Alternative A** is as described in paragraph 10 (Description of Project) Installing Pat-Trap machines and wireless voice call systems, shelter improvements and adding 2 new shooter shelters.
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** area will remain as an active trap range using leased or borrowed Pat-trap machines, using older “corded” trap release systems, no improvements to existing shooter shelters and no new shooter’s shelters.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Two alternatives have been considered, A (Proposed Alternative) and B (No Action Alternative). There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent.

Neither the proposed alternative (A) nor the no action alternative (B) would have any significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

- There are beneficial consequences for the acceptance of alternatives A to provide safe reliable and cost efficient new systems along with new and improved shooter’s shelters.
- The No Action Alternative would be not to provide additional Pat-trap machines, new wireless voice call systems, and new or improved shooter’s shelters and the range would continue with out these improvements. Land use would remain the same. Present activities of the range without the proposed improvements would continue. Therefore the proposed alternative is the prudent alternative.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:

None

List and explain proposed mitigative measures (stipulations):

None

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks

Wayne Schottler, 3365 Pine Hills Dr., Helena, MT 59602

PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being proposed are on properties owned by the Helena Trap Club of Helena, MT. The low impact routine activity proposed indicates that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative. The 71 year history of the Helena Trap Club providing safe shooting opportunities to its members and the public indicates support for the proposed alternative. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for the new trap machines, wireless voice call systems along with new and improved shooter's shelters as proposals outlined in Para. 2 & 10.

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN

Ecological Assessments

Helena, MT 59602

Date Completed: July 18, 2007

PART V. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

None Required

Describe public involvement, if any:

None